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IN MEMORIAM.

ROBERT HAY.

By A. H. THOMPSON, Topeka.

Robert Hay was born May 19, 1835, at Ashton-under-Lynn, in Lancashire, England, and died December 14, 1895, at Junction City, Kan.

He came of Scottish ancestry, and acquired his primary education in private schools in his native town, completing it in the College of London, where he pursued a special scientific course under Professor Huxley, and took honors.

Through reading the *Junction City Union*, and then as correspondent, he left England and came to Kansas in 1871, and settled on a farm in Geary county.

He taught school for ten years and was engaged in normal-institute work from its inception in the state. He first taught at Ogden, Kan., as principal, and as principal also at Holton and Chetopa, Kan.

Although the first years of his manhood were devoted to teaching, he early became interested in geology, which he later made his life-work. Even before leaving England he familiarized himself with the geology of his own and adjacent counties during his long vacation walks.

After removing to Kansas, he gradually acquired a local knowledge of the geology of Kansas, and as a field geologist he traveled for three years over Kansas. It was said that there was hardly a township in Kansas that he had not visited. He was connected with the State Board of Agriculture as its geologist, and did much valuable work for the board, which is embodied in his articles published in the reports. His work was practical, and tended toward the development of the natural resources of the state, in which he was always interested. In 1883 he was employed by the United States Geological Survey in the southwestern part of Kansas, and afterward for years on special commissions for the survey. In 1890 he was made geologist in charge of the artesian investigation of the great plains region conducted by the Department of Agriculture. A large and valuable report resulted from these labors. During the last year of his life he was employed to write a special report on the underground waters of western Kansas for the United States Geological Survey.

He enjoyed a wide reputation for accomplishments and ability; and the honesty and modesty of the man gave his opinions great weight. They were highly valued by government officials as well as by other scientific men who knew his real worth. He was one of the foremost of that noble band of patriot naturalists who have done so much for the investigation and description of the scientific resources of Kansas. He followed close in the footsteps of the first and greatest of that band, Professor Mudge; and he resembled that noble pioneer in many ways. The quantity and quality of his geological observations are ample evidence of the industry and perseverance of Professor Hay, often through difficulty and discouragement, with inadequate compensation, which all testify to his love and devotion to his special work.

His literary work was very extensive. He early showed his literary tendencies by writing a volume of sketches of his native region in Lancashire before leaving England. He was a voluminous contributor to Kansas newspapers, not on geology only, but on Kansas history and other matters as well. It was while

teaching in the higher grades of schools that he became interested in the geology of Kansas; and among his earlier writings on his favorite science was a pamphlet issued while conducting a teachers' institute in Norton county, embodying his observations on what he called the "Sunset Rocks." His contributions to the newspapers and magazines on geology and to the State Board of Agriculture and Academy of Science were very numerous. He conducted investigations for the Academy which are of permanent worth as geological work, the results of which are published in the Transactions.

For many years of his life he had a helpful companion in his wife, a lady of unusual literary and artistic merit, who was deeply interested in and associated with her husband's labors. She died about five years ago. Most of his papers were illustrated by her hands.

A list of his articles is appended to this sketch, prepared by Miss Jean Hay, the daughter of Professor Hay.

The personal character of the man made him esteemed by all who knew him. As has been said, "He was a scientist, a man of high literary culture, a close student, a gentleman in all that the name implies, and a citizen of more real worth than many have appreciated." It is the character that is the real foundation of life, and that upon which we most love to dwell in thinking and speaking of our departed friends. In a peculiar manner the character of Robert Hay was such that his good and noble qualities could not be overestimated or exaggerated, which can be said of few men. What we remember most about him is his goodness and gentleness; for, as he walked he scattered the fragrance of a kindly heart that lingers with us still. He was the personification of gentleness, and bound all hearts to him by the quiet demeanor that betokened the love he felt for all mankind.

It could be said of him, as Carlyle said of Scott: "There is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but it is a heroic poem, rhymed or unrhymed;" for truly the life of Robert Hay was an unrhymed, heroic poem. Simple and self-sacrificing; undergoing privations; with insufficient compensation and little hope of reward—such was his life, that he might pursue and contribute to his favorite science. He was one of the heroes of the commonplace—the martyrs of our daily life—who suffer, and strive, and fall and make no sign. His was that steadfastness to an ideal which makes heroes in an every-day life. He worked with painstaking zeal and patient abiding, through failure and disappointment, with slow and painful effort; and failed but to begin again. That is the spirit of true heroism; for he steadily upheld his ideal with the courage and faith that fought and overcame; that endured and suffered to the end.

He was what we call a *wise* man—for he had in full share that wisdom which holds that the knowledge of the truth is valuable above all else for its influence upon character. For wisdom is better than learning. The wisest man is not he who falls into the fewest errors, but he who has made the best use of what knowledge he had, be it much or little, for the growth of character and the good of mankind. In this sense Robert Hay was essentially a wise man in the wisdom that makes for what is best in the world.

One phase of his life with which not many were acquainted, was his exquisite literary tastes and accomplishments. His reading and acquaintance with the best authors were wide and varied. His speaking and writing on literary subjects were marvels of beauty and quaintness of expression. He was especially conversant with the Victorian poets, and could talk by the hour most delightfully and learnedly of the literature of this period. His memory was wonderful, and he could recite at length from the masterpieces in a most charming manner. He could

give the native touch to the dialect poems of Tennyson in a manner that was inimitable. One of his most charming letters, amounting to an essay of real literary merit, received a short time before his death, was upon the Arthurian legends. One of his last, if not the very last, literary efforts, was a lecture for the Keats Centenary, October 29, 1895, which was full of information about the poet and his times. It was charmingly written; but was never delivered in public, I believe, as his illness began before the occasion arrived. In his untimely death we are reminded of those beautiful lines in Shelley's "Adonais":

"Peace, peace, he is not dead;
He doth not sleep;
He hath awakened from the dream of life."

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